

MISSIONARY SHOES



What happened to Uncle Jason's shiny shoes?

By **Jamie Armstrong**

(Based on a true story)

"I hope they call me on a mission when I have grown a foot or two"
(*Children's Songbook*, 769).

Dallin wiggled with excitement on Grandma's brown leather couch. The suspense was almost more than he could stand. "Hurry, Uncle Jason. Hurry!" he shouted.

Uncle Jason was about to read his mission call. The whole family was there to watch him open his letter.

Jason carefully opened the envelope and silently read the letter. His eyes lit up. "I'm going to Argentina!" he yelled.

A few months later, it was time for Uncle Jason to go to the missionary training center. Dallin watched Uncle Jason pack his suitcase with white shirts, dark pants, ties, and scriptures. Then he put in a pair of shiny new shoes.

"Wow!" said Dallin. "Can I try those on?"

"Sure. Go ahead," said Uncle Jason.

Dallin slipped his feet into the big brown shoes and tromped around the room. He imagined himself as a missionary. He stood up a little taller. "When I go on a mission, I want a pair of shoes just like yours," he said. "They're so shiny, and they make me look cool!"

Uncle Jason grinned. "They sure do."

At the MTC, Uncle Jason learned how to teach people in Spanish. Sometimes Dallin got letters written just to him. In one letter Dallin learned that Jason was finally flying to Argentina!

Month after month passed. Dallin missed Uncle Jason a lot. But it was fun to read his stories about teaching people the gospel. One week Uncle Jason wrote:

► This week was the greatest! I got to baptize Carlos and his whole family! They have strong testimonies and are happy to be members of the Church.

One day Dallin decided to run over to Grandma's house to see if she had a new letter from Uncle Jason. When he walked through the door, he saw a big smile on Grandma's face.

"Guess what came in the mail today!" she said. She held up a white envelope with red and blue stripes.

"Another letter!" Dallin opened the envelope and began reading:

○ Today my companion and I walked for four hours trying to find the home of a man we met in the market. He wanted to learn about the plan of salvation. When we finally found his house, he wasn't there. We'll try again tomorrow. I want to find him before I come home next week.



"Next week?" Dallin said, looking up at Grandma.
 "Uncle Jason comes home from his mission next week?!"

"I can hardly believe it myself," said Grandma.

When the day finally came, Dallin went to the airport with his family. He squeezed Grandma's hand as they waited for Jason. Soon he saw several missionaries with nametags walking toward them.

"There he is!" Dallin shouted.

Uncle Jason looked older and taller than Dallin remembered. His shirt wasn't as white as it used to be. And his shoes were faded and scuffed.

His missionary shoes are ruined! Dallin thought.

Uncle Jason hugged Grandma. Then he bent down and hugged Dallin. "You've gotten so big! Did you miss me?"

"Yes!" said Dallin. He squeezed Uncle Jason tight.

On the ride home, Dallin stared down at Uncle Jason's worn-out shoes. He listened to him tell about

his mission. He had walked miles and miles on dusty roads searching for people to teach. He had spent hours and hours planting gardens and doing other kinds of service. He had worked hard serving Heavenly Father and the people in Argentina.

No wonder his shoes were so worn out, Dallin thought.

After a long time, Dallin finally spoke. "Uncle Jason, when I come home from my mission, I hope my shoes look just like yours." ♦

Turn the page for an activity to go with this story!



I have been sharing the gospel with a friend at school who doesn't know about Jesus. Now she asks me lots of questions. I love being a missionary.

Preslee M., age 8, North Carolina, USA